

Eastgate Environmental Health Services

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www.kingcounty.gov/health

Public Health 
Seattle & King County

December 5, 2011

(Home Owner Name)
(Home Owner Mailing Address)
Vashon, WA 98070

Re: Vashon Marine Recovery Area

Address: (ADDRESS)
Parcel No: (#####)
Owner: (OWNERS NAME)

Greetings (Home Owner Name):

You are receiving this letter because a deadline is fast approaching and your assistance is needed regarding your on-site sewage system (OSS).

As you know, your property is located in the Marine Recovery Area (MRA) and its septic system requires inspection and, if needed, repair. Public Health – Seattle & King County has been working with the Vashon community for the last four years helping property owners with information and consultation so that together, we can eliminate sources of contamination that affect community members, shellfish and the waters of one of our greatest resources, Puget Sound. I hope you have received information to help you understand this project through our several mailings, community meetings and information fairs, brochures, or our door-to-door visits. You can find more information about this project at our www.kingcounty.gov/health and typing “Marine Recovery Area” into the search box, or go to: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/ehs/wastewater/mra/background.aspx>

King County and other counties in the Puget Sound region adopted On-site Sewage System Management Plans in 2008 in recognition of the health risks associated with shoreline pollution and to address the requirements of the state law. That law requires property owners within the MRA to inspect, provide a record drawing of the system and repair or replace their On-Site Sewage (OSS) system if needed by July 1, 2012, then annually inspect OSS function after 2012.

Working together, we can help you to assess the condition of your on-site sewage system (OSS), determine if it is working properly, or find out if it will need repair or replacement. Failing septic systems have been inadvertently polluting Puget Sound and its marine life for years. As you may be aware, the west shore of Quartermaster Harbor and portions of the East Passage are closed to recreational and or commercial shellfish harvesting due to pollution. Inadequate or failing septic systems contribute bacteria, nitrogen and other contaminants that prevent shellfish harvesting and pose a serious health risk for the people and animals that use the shorelines.

Many property owners have recognized the potential problems associated with a failing OSS, including potential difficulty refinancing or selling their property. We are appreciative of the 34% of Vashon MRA property owners who have already provided us with inspection reports, and have their systems in good working order. With new technologies available and technical assistance resources from Public Health, this is a good opportunity for property owners to take action.

This letter is also notification that to date, we have not yet received an inspection report from you. To comply with the state law, inspections should be completed by February 3, 2012 and systems should be repaired by July 1, 2012.

How to take the next steps:

1. Obtain a professional inspection of your OSS to document the system type, location, function, and prepare an as-built plan of the system if one does not already exist. A list of professionals can be found at the website or you can call the numbers enclosed with this letter.
2. If the professional inspection determines that the OSS is not functioning, work with a licensed OSS designer to evaluate options to repair, replace, or install an alternate method of treating their wastewater.
3. Send your reports to Public Health at the address on this letterhead.

When property owners have completed an OSS inspection they will know the location, type and condition of their OSS system. After they have repaired or upgraded their OSS if needed, their existing home will have an approved OSS.

For your assistance, we have a variety of resources to assist MRA property owners with their OSS concerns including:

- Your OSS Status – Maps of the Vashon-Maury Island MRA showing individual parcels and the status of the OSS for each parcel.
- Technical Assistance – Public Health will provide a preliminary assessment of OSS function including site inspections and dye testing to identify discharges to marine waters or above ground locations.
- OSS As-Built Plans and Inspection Records – Property owners can request any available OSS as-built plans and inspection records for their site.
- Alternative Wastewater Treatment Options - Information on potential alternatives for wastewater system repair, upgrade or replacement and standards for industry inspections, repairs or replacement of OSS.
- MRA Information – Background on the Vashon-Maury Island MRA including implementation goals, barriers and opportunities; links to the state law creating MRA's (RCW 70.118A); the Board of Health On-Site Septic System Management Plan designating the MRA, and Washington State Department of Health's Office of Shellfish Protection shellfish surveys for Vashon-Maury Island.

Public Health has been working with Septic Solutions for Vashon, a subcommittee of the Vashon-Maury Island Community Council, to partner on the MRA. We are looking forward to meeting with property owners, residents, community associations and other interested groups to finalize compliance with the MRA. A series of neighborhood meetings will be scheduled at a variety of different times to discuss the MRA designation with property owners, learn about local conditions and review resources to assist you with MRA implementation.

To learn more about the Vashon Marine Recovery Area or Public Health assistance resources, please visit our web site below or contact us directly:

General information – Larry Stockton (206) 296-1910, Laurence.Stockton@KingCounty.Gov

Technical assistance - Jarone Baker (206) 296-9738, Jarone.Baker@KingCounty.Gov
<https://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/ehs/wastewater/mra/background.aspx>

Thank you for your partnership in restoring our waters.

Larry Fay, Manager

Plumbing, Wastewater, Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste Programs
Environmental Health Services, Public Health Seattle & King County

Enclosure:

Public Health - Seattle & King County Licensed On-Site Sewage System Inspectors